

Listing of Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions.

Claims 1-14: Canceled.

15. (currently amended)

An electrical component, ~~especially a switch or potentiometer (6),~~ comprising:

- ~~wherein the component (6) has~~ at least two electrical contacts (12, 13),
- ~~wherein the component (6) has~~ a transfer volume (11) comprising an electrically conducting, magnetic powder (1), ~~especially according to claim 1 or~~ an electrically conducting, magnetic liquid (1'), for transferring an electrical signal and/or an electric voltage and/or an electric current between two of the contacts (12, 13), and
- ~~wherein the component (6) has~~ an actuating device (15) which, when actuated, displaces the transfer volume (11) by means of magnetic forces (14) relative to the contacts (12, 13).

16. (Previously Presented)

The component according to claim 15,
wherein

- the contacts (12, 13) and the transfer volume (11) are arranged in a casing (20),

- the actuating device (15) is arranged outside on the casing (20) or outside the casing (20),

- at least one wall (21) of the casing (20) is constructed as permeable for the magnetic forces (14) of the actuating device (15).

17. (Currently Amended)

The component according to claim 15, wherein

the actuating device (15) has an actuator (16) which has at least one magnet (18) for generating the magnetic forces (14) and is displaceable along a pre-determined displacement path for the ~~actuating~~ transfer volume (11) relative to the contacts (12, 13).

18. (Previously Presented)

The component according to claim 16 wherein

the actuator (16) is displaceable along the casing (20) without contact.

19. (Currently Amended)

The component according to claim 15 wherein

the actuating device (15) has a magnetic force generator which is constructed ~~in the fashion of~~ as a linear motor, which

extends along a pre-determined displacement path for the ~~actuating~~ transfer volume (11) and is used to generate magnetic forces (14) which drive the ~~actuating~~ transfer volume (11) along the displacement path.

20. (Currently Amended)

The component according to claim 15, wherein

- the component is a potentiometer (6) whose collector track (13) and resistance track (12) respectively form a contact,
- the collector track (13) and resistance track (12) are arranged adjacent to one another without contact,
- the ~~actuating~~ transfer volume (11) interconnects the collector track (13) and the resistance track (12),
- the relative position of the transfer volume (11) along the collector track (13) and along the resistance track (12) can be adjusted with the actuating device (15).

21. (Currently Amended)

The component according to claim 15, wherein

the component (6) is ~~a member of the following group of components~~ selected from the group consisting of: potentiometer, sealed potentiometer, potentiometer with built-in switch, switch,

sealed switch, limit switch, proximity switch, step switch, incremental encoder, absolute encoder, relay, and sealed relay.

22. (currently amended)

The component of claim 15, wherein the transfer volume is an electrically conducting, magnetic liquid comprising a carrier liquid (3) containing a powder (1) ~~according to claim 1~~ comprising or made of electrically conducting and magnetic particles.

23. (New)

The component according to claim 15, wherein the transfer volume is an electrically conducting, magnetic powder comprising or made of electrically conducting and magnetic particles.

24. (New)

The component according to claim 23, wherein the particles that are pre-magnetised so that they mutually attract.

25. (New)

The component according to claim 23, wherein the particles have an average grain size which is smaller than 50 μm .

26. (New)

The component according to claim 23, wherein the particles are constructed as substantially spherical.

27. (New)

The component according to claim 23, wherein the electrically conducting, magnetic particles have an electrically conducting coated magnetic core.

28. (New)

The component according to claim 27, wherein the magnetic cores consist of an electrically non-conducting material.

29. (New)

The component according to claim 27, wherein the magnetic cores consist of ferrite.

30. (New)

The component according to claim 27, wherein the magnetic cores are coated with carbon or with a metal.

31. (New) The component according to claim 22, wherein the carrier liquid is electrically non-conducting and/or non-magnetic.

32. (New) The component according to claim 22, wherein the carrier liquid is an oil.

33. (New) The component according to claim 22, wherein the carrier liquid has a relatively high surface tension.

34. (New) The component according to claim 22, wherein the carrier liquid is a non-migrating oil.

Election of Inventions:

The Patent Examiner has required the selection of one of the following inventions for further prosecution:

Group I: Claims 1-14 and 22, drawn to a powder;

Group II: Claims 15-21, drawn to an electrical
 component;

A telephone discussion with the Examiner on September 25, 2005 resulted in the above revised election requirement, placing claim 22 in Group I, rather than in Group II.

ELECTION:

Applicant respectfully elects, the invention of Group II, Claims 15-21, as well as amended claim 22 and new claims 23-34, drawn to an electrical component, for further prosecution.